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WASHINGTON AP - The State Department has declined to go along with a suggestion that Secretary William P. Rogers is angry at the Central Intelligence Agency for putting out word that the Soviets may be thinking about an air strike on Red China's atomic plants.

Press officer Robert J. McCloskey refused Friday to take any side publicly in what he portrayed as competitive newspaper enterprise over a lunch CIA chief Richard Helms had with some reporters earlier this week.

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Helms has been identified-by newsmen who were not at the lunch and therefore approved for release 2002/01/02 : CIA-RDP71B00364R000300010008-6 stories dealing with the possibility of such a Soviet attack and about CIA's claim of innocence in the Green Beret murder charges in Saigon.

CIA's longstanding practice is public silence on overseas developments and anti-CIA allegations poured forth daily by foes abroad.

When CIA feels maligned by stories over which other U.S. government agencies may have some control, it sometimes asks them to issue a statement which will put the CIA in a better light.

CIA men also from time to time have explained their case to congressmen-who hold CIA's purse strings-and on a "don't quote me," basis to newsmen.

In the Green Beret case, the Army so far has refused to publicly disavow defense lawyer allegations in behalf of the arrested men that the CIA ordered the killing of a suspected Vietnamese double agent. CIA contends it issued no such order. The Army is keeping silent pending further investigation of the Green Beret group.

In the Sino-Soviet dispute, there is conjecture as to whether the Soviets themselves might be floating the notion of a possible attack on Chinese nuclear installations in order to scare Peking. It is also speculated that anti-Soviet Communist sources may be promoting the surprise attack idea for their own psychological warfare purposes.

The official U.S. government view is that a Russian-Chinese armed clash bigger than border flareups is both unlikely and undesirable.

MCCloskey quoted a past Rogers statement to this effect, and when asked about what was attributed to Helms he would not subscribe to a suggestion that the CIA chief had damaged Rogers' efforts for U.S. neutrality in the Sino-Soviet quarrel.

While Helms himself was reported out of town Friday, CIA colleagues expected he would be embarrassed by his identification with the recent stories. It would not be CIA's first embarrassment in print. To take some examples from this decade:

- In 1960 the Soviets shot down a CIA U-2 surveillance plane deep inside Russian territory. A false CIA cover story was first issued through the State Department. President Eisenhower wound up publicly accepting responsibility for the spy flight.

- When the Cuban invasion failed the following year, Kennedy administration officials pinned much of the blame on CIA.

- More recently, CIA was the target of public brickbats upon disclosure that it had been paying secret funds to student and other organizations which were in competition with Communist agencies in foreign countries. The Johnson administration ended the practice, which CIA sources said had been assigned to them by government superiors early in the days of the cold war.

- Soon after he took the top CIA job in 1966, a letter under Helms' signature went to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. It praised an editorial entitled "Brickbats for Fulbright." Helms, a former newspaperman, apologized to Sen. J. W. Fulbright, D-Ark., Senate Foreign Relations committee chairman.

CIA men are generally proud of the intelligence agency's over-all performance and, on occasion, have passed out word about successes. Helms is said to rate among CIA's more noteworthy successes the detailed intelligence on Soviet movement of missiles into Cuba in 1962 and accurate predictions concerning the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

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